

## BOYS.

Now, if anyone has an easy time  
In this world of push and pull,  
It is not the boy of the family,  
For his hands are always full.  
I'd like to ask, who fills the stove?  
Where is the girl that could?  
Who brings in water, who lights the fire,  
And splits the kindling wood?  
And who is it that cleans the walks  
After hours of snowing?  
In summer, who keeps down the weeds,  
By diligently hoeing?  
And who must harness the faithful horse  
When the girls would ride about?  
And who must clean the carriage off?  
The boy, you'll own, no doubt.  
And who does the many other things  
Too numerous to mention?  
The boy is the "general utility man,"  
And really deserves a pension!  
Friends! Just praise the boy sometimes,  
When he does his very best;  
And don't always want the easy chair  
When he's taking a little rest.  
Don't let him always be the last  
To see the new magazine;  
And sometimes let the boy be heard,  
As well as to be seen.  
That boys are far from perfect  
Is understood by all.  
But they have hearts, remember,  
For "men are boys grown tall."  
And when a boy has been working  
His level best for days,  
It does him good, I tell you,  
To have some hearty praise!  
He is not merely a combination  
Of muddy boots and a heavy nose,  
And he likes to be looked upon  
As one of the family joys.  
—The Gem.



By CHAUNCEY C. HOTCHKISS  
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## CHAPTER XIX.—CONTINUED.

Saving the two shots from the first boat, not a small arm had been fired by them up to this time, their determination to carry the vessel by cold steel alone being apparent all through the attack. As my eye ranged over the circle of men that spread about us and hemmed us to the taffrail (yet for all their numbers were held off by the command of their officers), I saw many a face well known to me ashore, but not one expressing an atom of mercy. With a watchful look I anticipated any possible onset, and yet through all the pent vigor of tightened nerves and stiffened muscles my gaze played beyond their lines and marked the details of the surroundings.

The broad ocean lay almost like glass save for the regular heave that passed over it like a wave over the surface of molten metal. Off our starboard beam was an upturned boat floating lazily away, it probably having been stove or capsized by the hatch I had cast into it, and near it drifted the hatch itself. On deck the fallen canvas covered the vessel amidsthips, and aloft the ragged stump of the topmast, standing clear against the dappled sky, looked like a pine shivered by lightning. A profound silence had fallen where a moment before had been the din of shouts and crashing timber—profound save for a dull thumping forward, which I knew came from the prisoners, who were thus signaling for release. The moment was near at hand when I should pass my soul to its Maker, and yet, though the resolve was as strong as ever, I wavered, not in fear of the next world, but dreading the terrible struggle that would come when a healthy body like mine wrestles in the grip of suffocation. If our captors could not be goaded into shooting me, nothing was left but to cast myself into the sea, and this I would not do so long as the young Quaker stood at my side.

A sudden cry from the bow, soon followed by the sound of metal striking metal, told me that the prisoners were out and being freed from their iron. Belden, without hesitating, evidently awaiting the arrival of his superior to direct future movements. Disarmed save for the bare steel in our hands, we were an easy prey to him and our deaths now been his object; but as there had been no show of force after boarding us, the peppy royalist, still smarting from the disgrace under which I had been the mosen of placing him, felt sure of his ultimate triumph over me, and, giving the order to hold us where we stood, turned toward the point of the disturbance forward and hurried off. I was a step in advance of Ames, who still leaned against the wheel, when I heard his voice in my ear.

"There's a fair chance for a leap, Donald," he whispered. "The last tie is gone. Be thee ready?"  
"Nay, lad," I answered softly. "We are not yet parted. I still hang to my oath. I have seen nothing of Gertrude. Where can she be?"  
"She is past the sight of this, thank God!" he returned. "She is dead, man; dead and gone, and we will soon follow her. I saw her."

Again he was interrupted, this time by a yell from the bow, and the man who uttered it started off chased by half a dozen marines. It was Scammell. With little upon him save a shirt and his small clothes, he broke through the half circle that compassed us, halting just within its limits. He was a horrible object. His hair hung tangled over his shoulders; his eyes were fierce and bloodshot; his face was distorted by rage, and its pallor was startling. Without a word of warning he called me a vile name, and with an oath raised a pistol he had probably snatched from some one and, leveling it at me, fired. The ball passed betwixt my body and elbow without touching the skin, but it struck Ames, who was just behind me. I heard a deep groan as the youth fell to the deck, his head striking the plank with a heavy blow, and a number of hands sprang upon the infuriated officer and dragged him back ward.

It was done in an instant. The shock and suddenness of the attack came like a thunderbolt, and yet I retained my presence of mind. With my eye still fixed on my enemies, I stooped to one knee and felt for the hand of my friend, calling on him to speak; but no sound came to my repeated appeal, and the hand I found gave no answering pressure. He was dead past doubt, and had quickly joined his sister, who, in some manner unknown to me, had gone before him.

It was the culminating wave of disaster, and for the moment I felt like sinking beneath it. Within a quarter hour by violence I had been bereft of my two companions, and thus was I suddenly freed from my obligation to live. With some left for the will to combat, surrounded by triumphant enemies, and before me ruin in the shape of

the noose, it was now my right, as well as considered duty, to preserve myself from the disgrace of being hanged as a spy. "Would he but a short struggle, a moment's brief agony, perhaps, and then the end. I braced myself for the ordeal. Rising to my feet, I gave a last glance around, my eye taking in the vast sweep of the sea, on deck the marines still wrestling with the murderous royalist, and, hurrying aft, Belden, followed by Lounsbury. Then turning my thoughts aloft, I had a revelation without the slightest mental effort, without the slightest bending of the mind toward any refuge this side of the great unknown, a possible—ay, probable—way of escape opened before me. As the angel of the Lord at the last moment called on Abraham to desist from the sacrifice of his son, so burst this light out of thick darkness and showed me my work was not yet finished. More than willing was I to grasp this more than chance. As though a stone had been rolled from my chest, I took a deep breath, and quickly unloosing my belt, threw both cutlase and scabbard to the deck, then turning, with a stride I reached the rail and cast myself headlong into the sea.

## CHAPTER XX. THE SHELL OF THE DINY.

Never was my love of life or the certainty of my saving it greater than when I shot beneath the surface of the ocean. Like a plummet I went down, the air bubbles I carried with me roaring in my ears like a cataract. As I lost the impetus of the dive I turned and looked up. Having gone over the starboard quarter, I was almost under the stern, and the clear green of the water magnified the great shadowy hull of the schooner as she stretched forward into seeming infinity. Like a blot on the silvery surface above me lay the overturned dingy, still held to the vessel by its painter, and in her lay my salvation.

With a few vigorous strokes I swam under it, and, regulating my rise as best I could, came to the surface within the shell of the wrecked boat. The move had been successful. If the trick was unsuspected, I was safe. Letting go my pent breath in a blast, I thanked God for His sudden intervention, and prayed that His hand be not removed from me.

Settled low as was the overturned dingy, my head barely cleared her bottom, but that was sufficient. Sustaining my position by a light hold on the thwart, that my weight should not prevent the regular and natural roll of the wreck, with nerves now tuned to their highest pitch, I hung and awaited developments. The hole in the boat's bottom furnished me with air, and, to my astonishment, this vent in the hollow which now sheltered me gave to my retreat the character of a trumpet, and every sound was magnified, though its quality was changed to the deep sonorous roar such as one hears come from the heart of a conch held to the ear. It was an indistinct babble of cries and oaths that first greeted me, and from the few words I could disentangle I guessed that the whole host had rushed to the schooner's side in the hope that I would rise. Had I still courted death, I might easily have met with it by means of a bullet through my head, for through the confused humming of voices I distinctly heard the sharp clicking of gunlocks, and knew that had I appeared I would have been made a target for a score of muskets.

The sound of voices decreased as the moments flew, and when at last it seemed certain that I had gone to the bottom, there came a general awakening, and a sharp cry was given to search the hull, strike the flag, and hoist the British ensign. The clicking of boot heels and the rattling of arms were more distinct than words, but the marines had barely scattered to obey the last commands when, above all else, I heard an unknown voice:

"Overhaul that carrion, and then pitch it overboard!"

This I knew must refer to the body of my poor friend, but before I could realize the necessity of the order thus brutally given, as clear as the order itself rose the voice of Scammell:

"Look, look, Belden! Damn me, but I thought I had brought down a buzzard in missing the hawk, when, after all, I have struck but a peg-legged thing! Thorndyke himself! By the crime of Judas, I wish it had been the other way! If this young, old broad-brim be not Beverly Ames, I'll lose fifty pounds to any one of you! Quick, man! See, he is not dead! 'Fore God, but mayhap he can yet give us some news of his sister! Overboard he goes not! Dead or alive, he must be taken to Clifton, else your commission is in danger! Know you not that he is connected with Mrs. Badely? Send off for help! Is not that long-legged Irishman yet aboard you?"

Here a number of voices joined in and turned to a confused roar all words at once following. In the space of a few minutes I heard a boat putting away from the side, the work her in the water making for our car drums almost painful. For a time there reigned comparative silence, and then came what was doubtless a marine's report:

"The hold is clear of all life, sir. Nawthin' but lead below, an' cabin an' fore-cabin all cleaned out barrin' some arms an' the captain's old clothes."

"How's this, Scammell?" said Belden, evidently turning to that officer. "We saw the men aboard, and but two are accounted for. Thorndyke has gone to help over the side, and this lad of yours is like to join him by another route! Where's the third?"

"There was no third," came the sharp response. "Two it was that smothered us below. I know of none other! no more does Lounsbury."

"Nay," said that worthy, speaking for the first time, and with a thick spit to his speech, "there was never more than four legs to the lot. Mayhap that giant split hiself in two for the sake o' looks—there was enough o' him. Thank God for his loss! I would ne'er sleep easy again knowin' him alive."

Here words fell to a murmur until Lounsbury again spoke, evidently addressing himself to the one who was in authority on board:

"Now I take it, lieutenant, that by rights this craft is mine. 'What mean ye?"

"Ay, only be right o' prize, I mean," was the answer. "Twas I who first laid hand on her, an' got a split skull for my pains, an' not a damn sovereign to help heal it, neither so much glory as shines from the buttons o' yer coat. Prize be cursed! Now, if yer captaining wills to let me take her into port—as I came nigh doing awhile ago—'twill go an' get me a job, mayhap, like that lost through Thorndyke takin' my name, damn me, say, 'Dye see?"

"Ay, I see, ye sweep! And is that all? No prize money?"

"Ay, all, all. Only to sail her home; no more."

"No more, eh? Ye are a cursed deep villain, but I'll touch the captain on it. Go get the grime from your face and look less like a toad. Had he seen you, 'twas no wonder he launched himself over the rail. What now, Scammell? Does the lad still live?"

"He lives, indeed," was the answer, "but whether or no he will hide long I cannot say. He was better on deck than he is below. The cabin still stinks. I hope 'twill not be forever before the doctor gets here. Was he drunk at mess? It is possible he can hold the lad's life long enough to allow him to speak; he does little now but moan."

At this the two walked forward, and I heard nothing but the coarse voices of the marines as they sang out to one another or laughed uncouthly.

The knowledge that Ames still lived gave me a quick sense of relief—a relief which fled on the instant as I thought of the probable future in store for him. My own position was infinitely better than his, even were he not suffering from a wound, and as for his sister, after all was done, was she not better off than either? But was she dead? If not, what could have become of her? I had heard that the vessel had been searched without finding a trace of the third party to whom Belden had referred. On seeing all was lost, was it possible that she had thrown herself overboard that she might not witness her brother's tragic end? It was like her. It would have been an act showing her strength of character, as well as the weakness of her sex; a natural recoil from physical and mental suffering without a purpose; a heroic self-sacrifice. It was as well she had not suffered captivity and long-drawn misery. With her brother at death's door, or perhaps saved to die by military law, her property confiscated, with either a home or relatives and at the mercy of Clinton's heartless mistress, life would have had no more for her than the doubtful benefit of mere existence in confinement for an indefinite period.

And yet was my reason against the idea of her self-destruction. There was mystery in her disappearance, but its solution lay not in that. The attacking party had boarded us from either side, yet not an eye had seen her cast herself into the sea. There was more than this to make me doubtful. For her brother's sake she had sacrificed herself before Clinton, yet on my hand was placed her last kiss. Had she left the world thus, without a word to him, without a warning to me? It was unnatural, unholy; it was monstrous to think of, and yet—The possible solution of the riddle as it drove into my brain had scarce time to find lodgment before it was put to flight by the voice of Belden, which seemed to come from directly overhead, his words showing that the continuance of my present safety was not assured.

"Think you that dingy could be hauled aboard and repaired? 'Twas a neat shot, and the ball seems to have left her like a knife."

"So it looks," came an answer, "but I'll warrant you'll find her full of fissures. The work will barely repay the trouble. Better cut her adrift. If wind comes, the wreck will drag like a sea anchor. You might give attention to the quarter boat yonder, and get the hatch aboard."

"The hatch, yes," Belden returned; "but the boat is stove badly. Curses on the rebel!"



be has cost us ten men in all, and only to give us the ship! 'Tis small wonder Lounsbury has the shakes at thought of him! Think of the nerve—"

"Damn him!" was the retort. "What about the schooner? Lounsbury wants to take her in. There's nothing gone but the foretopmast, and with three men he could work her in the water making for our car drums almost painful. In the face of our being short-handed, the idea is not bad if the villain can be trusted."

"He'll scarce run off with the schooner," answered Belden, "and lead is no temptation, though I'd be shy of trusting him with anything more valuable. I know him of old. He was scavenger to Clinton, and to Howe before him. Here, lad, cut away that painter."

The last words were an order probably given to a sailor, for presently I heard the splash of the severed line. At the same moment a boat swept by, and from the few words I could gather I guessed the Irish surgeon had arrived and gone aboard.

After that more boats passed and re-passed as time dragged on, and finally the bulk of the vessel's captors returned to their own schooner, for, saving now and then the sound of a single man tramping the deck, the stillness was unbroken.

It was with mighty satisfaction that I had heard the final order to cut the tie binding my refuge to the schooner. I gave no thought to what might come of my being adrift on the broad ocean. Beyond each moment as it came and went I seemed to have no interest. The future was blank, nor need I consider it so long as the wind held off, for in the calm the dingy and schooner would not part company, and until darkness fell I would be compelled to remain in my present pinched quarters.

Hooded as I was, up to the present my hearing had been my only sense brought into play, but with the departure of the last boat load of men I used my eyes for the first time. The interior of the shelter under which I hung was lighted almost entirely from below, and a delicate greenish-blue tint played over the planks and ribs of the wreck. Shielded from direct light overhead, the shell gave all the effects of a water telescope, for, on turning my eyes downward, my sight pierced the ocean for fathom after fathom, the color of the depths growing from the most tender blue to a clear and then dark green, showing me that the bottom lay beyond vision and far below. It was only by turning to the hole in the keel that I could guess the hour, nor was it long before the sun had set and darkness came on apace. By the natural attraction of floating bodies, the boat had drawn near the schooner, and, as they struck and crunched together, I heard the voice of the surgeon as he left the cabin and came on deck.

"Well, by the powers, I suppose I must obey orders. If the boy is moved, he dies—that's flat—an' if my soul, he may go, spite o' me skill! I must bide here the night, must I? Ay, well; send aboard a couple o' bottles, Belden, or, by the piper, I'll mutiny. Why should a dirty rebel be worth more than our men? Is Scammell to bide with me?"

"No," answered Belden; "he's sent for by the captain. I'll fix the liquor, McCary. Now, Mr. Lounsbury, you have heard your instructions. Follow us as soon as the wind rises; you will have it ere long—the glass has fallen. We will stand near you. Are you ready, Scammell?"

There was suppressed conversation after this, and then another boat put away. In perhaps an hour it returned and was hoisted to the davits, and then again there was silence—a deep, brooding silence, such as is only known in a night calm on the sea.

As I have said, I had given no thought to the future or what consequence my present situation might entail should the schooner follow her captor. But as the darkness deepened and a chill due to my protracted submersion struck to my bones, I realized that, except for having put myself beyond the sight of my enemies, I had accomplished nothing. True it was that I might have laid a course ere this, for I had hung unmolested for a number of hours; but, instead of turning to my own interests, I had let my brain play over the mystery of the disappearance of Miss King. What this portended I had failed to dwell upon. Knowing that for myself there remained nothing to do but stay where I was until chance should open a way for me to gain the shore or mischance deliver me a prisoner or send me to the bottom, I had racked my fancy for a solution of the one question regarding the lady. As a reward for this constant effort, I had hit upon what I thought to be the correct answer to the puzzle, but to verify it had been thus far beyond possibility. Now the darkness, the warning chill, and my general uncertainty brought me up with a round turn, and I gave attention solely to my own affairs.

Further than that I must leave my shelter and gain the schooner, I could not proceed in laying my line of action. To use the wreck as a support and push the unmanageable thing for an uncertain number of miles to the Long Island coast would result, in my present condition, in collapse and death. It did not take me long to determine that my only hope lay in the near-by schooner; a forlorn hope at best, for the attempt to board her would immediately place my life in jeopardy. Nor would I have turned to thought to her had I not overheard that she would be manned by Lounsbury and three hands only. This handful of men (the doctor counting as nothing in my eyes), the calm, and the probable total lack of discipline which would follow the transfer of the sailors from a vessel of war to a half-dismantled prize under unofficial command, might allow me to gain foothold on deck. Ay, I thought, by some possibility I might reclaim my lost and become master of the situation, only let me fairly see the chance.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## YANKEE ADVERTISING DODGE.

An Instance in Which a Shrewd Hunter Makes a Good Clean-Up with Cheap Cigars.

An ex-collector of customs relates this as among his experiences: "Some years ago and shortly prior to the holidays a man came into the office and said that he wanted to talk with me personally. He looked like an unsophisticated fellow who had come in from the country to try his hand at business, though he had sharp features and a nasal twang.

"'Mister,' he began when we were alone, 'I'm in a kind of a snarl and I've come to you because I want to do the square thing. I had a nice lot of Havana cigars shipped to Windsor, thinkin' I could do a stroke sellin' 'em here in Detroit. I had a man there to take care of 'em till I come on, but he, not knowin' nothin' about the law, packs them cigars in a boat an' brings 'em over here without payin' no duty. I reckon it was emuggling, but he's honest as the sun and I hurried right here soon's I heard of what he'd done. Here's a sample of them cigars,' as he held out a box, 'and I want to say right here that I never had a more delicate smoke.' He took me to the little room he had rented and showed me hundreds of boxes on which he had paid the duty, and I let the matter drop. It got into the papers, even to my verdict as to the quality of the cigars.

"Then my honest Yankee made a special Christmas sale, patronized chiefly by ladies who did not care so much about price as they did about the credit of having once selected good goods. He was closed out in no time and disappeared. There was a rank odor in the local atmosphere that Christmas. The cigars were cheap Connecticut fillers and cheaper Pennsylvania wrappers. The cigar he gave me was a 'ringer.' Uncle Sam got money that did not belong to him, but it was an advertising scheme out of which the Yankee made a fat thing."

—Detroit Journal.

## The Woman of It.

Postal Clerk—This letter is overweight, ma'am. You'll have to put another stamp on it.

Woman—I think the government is just too mean for anything. I know I've mailed hundreds of letters that weren't anywhere near full weight, so I think the least you can do is to let this one go through.—Judge.

## A Pertinent Inquiry.

Newlywed (complacently)—Oh! of course, all women have sharp tongues; "every rose has its thorn," you know. Olfemier (dryly)—And have you noticed, yet, how a rose will fade, but a thorn won't?—Puck.

## Strategy.

"Why is it that you get down to the office so early now?"

"My wife's doing her own cooking, and I have to make her believe that I can't wait for breakfast."—Chicago Daily News.

## She Talked.

"He said you were a bird."

"Really?" she exclaimed, delighted. "Yes—a parrot."—Chicago Post.

## TALK ABOUT CRABS.

They Have a Longer Pedigree Than Any Other Creature.

Once They Used to Eat Everything That Came Within Reach of Their Claws, Now They Are Hunted to Be Eaten.

[Special Washington Letter.]

"WITH April goes the oyster," is one of the time-honored sayings of the people of this section. The belief prevails that "only in those months in which the letter 'R' is found should oysters be eaten." Consequently the oyster season every year begins with September and ends with April. However, at the seaside resorts oysters are served at the hotels during the summer months, but they are taken directly from the salt water to the table.

With the departure of the oysters we are accustomed to having crabs and clams. Little oyster clams are at the top of the bill of fare in all first-class hotels. We have clam chowder, and clam broth, and clam patties, hashed clams and stewed clams, and clams in all styles. To most people they are palatable, and also almost indigestible; that is, to most people in cities. But by the dwellers along the seashore, who take a great deal of physical exercise, they are regarded as an almost indispensable article of summer diet, and nobody complains that they are indigestible.

But all of our people eat crabs, the soft shell variety being exceptionally popular. They furnish food to suit the palate of the most fastidious of epicures, and they are so delicate that digestion is a part of the pleasure of their consumption. They are usually served broiled, on toast. The hard shell crabs are usually boiled, picked, minced and served as deviled crabs.

The crabs caught and utilized to-day are comparatively small, very few of them being more than six inches in length. If you get one a foot long it is a giant. And yet, in comparatively modern times, about 20,000,000 years ago, they used to attain great size. In those days frogs used to be six feet long, bigger than most men, and they thought nothing of hopping two or three blocks at a single leap.

Calcareous mud covered the entire continent of North America, once upon a time; say about 20,000,000 years ago. This mud was at the bottom of the sea, and when the mountain ranges of the east and west were volcanically upheaved the muddy sea bottom became dry land. There is an average of 65,000 feet of thickness of the sea bottom deposits on this continent. The lowest and oldest layer was the calcareous mud, in which certain animals were embedded as the hardening process went on. Consequently the scientists of to-day find those animals hermetically sealed in the rocky layer which was once muddy sea bottom.

In the Smithsonian institution there are many specimens of these ancestors of the crabs and lobsters of to-day. They have turned to stone, with the mud, but they have been perfectly preserved, even to the facets of their eyes. The professors who study these matters say that with just a little bit of calculation they can tell how old these specimens are and they talk of a hundred thousand centuries just as mothers talk of the ages of their babies.

They say that the very learned Bishop Pontoppidan was the first to describe the crab as "a red fish which walks backwards," when, as a matter



COCOANUT CRAB AT DINNER.

of fact, it is not a fish, is not red, and does not walk backward at all. Crabs and lobsters are green or dark brown. Their skeletons are outside of them, and their meat is so delicate and like jelly that, if their shell is broken in any part, it oozes out like thick molasses. They are not killed as other animals or fishes are killed. They are put into boiling hot water and killed that way. When taken out of the water they are red on the outside, but their meat becomes very firm and it is white.

The ancestors of the crabs of the present day are said to be the oldest creatures in the world, particularly the horseshoe crabs. They were slightly modified trilobites, and the specimens on exhibition here represent the most ancient family on earth. They existed long before man was created, thousands upon thousands of years before the creatures from whom some scientists have made bold to say that mankind was evolved. But when they begin to talk of thousands of centuries they are leaving the domain of positive science, and are trenching upon the domain of philosophy and theology; and into those domains we will not follow them.

To describe all of the specimens on exhibition would be the work of a lifetime; and to even make mention of all of them, by their scientific names, would fill several columns without giving any description of them whatever. The ancient horseshoe crabs were tremendous fellows,

almost as big as modern whales. Those were the days of the titans of the deep. The largest lobster found in recent years weighed 13 pounds, and its skeleton has been preserved. It is a very ugly looking beast, and would have been able to clasp a man's body in one of its claws and crush it in two. The claws of the average sized crab of to-day are sharp enough and strong enough to bite off your fingers.

Along the Atlantic coast the business of catching crabs and lobsters has increased during the past 25 years to such an extent that almost all of the big ones have been taken and eaten. But there are specimens here from the Pacific coasts of Asia which are of enormous size. There is one preserved Japanese crab which has a spread of 12 feet with his claws. That fellow could have taken two men, in the water, and killed them at once. So long as those fellows are in those waters, it is fair to presume that the Japanese ladies and gentlemen will not disport themselves in the surf, as hundreds of thousands of our people do at the famous coast resorts of this country.

In a four gallon jar, tightly stoppered away, there is what is called a "cocoanut crab." This fellow, with his companions, was in the habit of going



CRABS ON TOAST.

ashore, climbing cocoanut trees, tearing off the outer husks with his tremendous claws, then knocking in the shell at one of the eyes, and drinking the milk. Then it would crush the shell and scoop out the meat. It has a long pair of pinchers, created manifestly for this very purpose. The cocoanut crabs inhabit the waters and islands of the Indian ocean. They pick the fibers of cocoanuts and make beds for themselves.

Almost all crabs are fighting animals, ready for battle at all times, and with all kinds of sea dwellers. But there are varieties which will not fight if they can avoid it, and nature has provided them with Quaker habits, so that they can avoid trouble. One specimen looks as though it was covered with whitish moss, which is something part animal and part vegetable. Another kind is covered with growing sponge, all but its eyes and the tips of its claws. So covered, the crab hides in crevices where sponge is growing, and he becomes as white like the sponge as he can. There is a California crab who has a beautiful snuff box beneath his body, for carrying eggs. This box closes with a snap, exactly like a manufactured snuff box.

"The messmate" is a little bit of a crab which is usually found inside of the shell of an oyster. Epicures regard these as great delicacies. The men of knowledge who study these and all other crabs say that the "messmate" does not feed upon the oyster, but simply makes its home in the oyster's shell, and eats a part of whatever the oyster finds to eat. Oysters have been appropriately termed by some good people as the "scavengers of the sea," and on that account they will not eat oysters. These little "messmates" are similar scavengers.

Cows "chew the cud" and are called ruminating animals. In one respect crabs are like unto them. They have ten legs, eight pairs of jaws, a heart in the middle of the back, and teeth in the stomach. With his jaws the crab catches and kills his food, and digests it while chewing it in the stomach. Originally crabs had tails, but they have learned to dispense with caudal appendages by evolutions which have required centuries.

In order to keep pace with the demand, thousands of men have for many years made crab and lobster catching a regular business. Their success has been so great that the Atlantic coast has been dredged and trapped almost to depletion. For the past 12 years the fish commission has been artificially hatching and planting along the coast countless millions of little fellows; and a majority of them are gobbled down by varieties of fish having tastes as epicurean as that of man. Besides, the little fellows are cannibal-like, and will kill each other off, the stronger feeding upon the weaker. It takes a year or two for young crabs to attain sufficient size and strength to defend themselves or hide away from their enemies. Hence the fish commission is confronted with difficulties which are disheartening.

The next time we indulge in soft shell crabs on toast we will know more about what we are eating; likewise about deviled crabs and lobsters.

SMITH D. FRY.

But Then He Caught It.  
"You've been fishing again," said the stern parent. "Suppose you come with me now to the woodshed."  
"Father," protested the bright youth, "I hope you intend to make the punishment fit the crime."  
"That's my intention."  
"Well, father, the crime amounted to two nicotines. I didn't catch a thing."—Philadelphia Press.